

[Acr I]

day in my life, isn't it? That is why I urn giving
 this to-night/ !>o sit down. *[Still arranging party flowers.]*

Lord Darlington. [Sitting down^] I wish I had
 known it was your birthday. Lady Windermere. I would
 have covered the whole street in front of your house with
 flowers for you to walk on. They are made for you. *[A short pause.]*

Lady Windermere. Lord Darlington, you
 annoyed me last night at the Foreign Office. I am afraid you
 are going to annoy me again.

Lord Darlington. I, Lady Windermere ?

Enter Parker and footman C, with tray and tea things.

Lady Windermere. Put it there, Parker. That will
 do. *[Wipes her hands with her pocket handkerchief, goes to tea-table L, and sits down.]* Won't you come over. Lord
 Darlington ?

[Exit Parker C.]

Lord Darlington. [Takes chair and goes across L C.] I
 am quite miserable, Lady Windermere. You must tell
 me what I did. *[Sits down at table L.]*

Lady Windermere. Well, you kept paying me
 elaborate compliments the whole evening.

Lord Darlington. [Smiling.] Ah, nowadays we are all
 of us so hard up, that the only pleasant things to pay
 are compliments.

They're the only things we can pay.

Lady Windermere. [Shaking her head.] No, I am
 talking very seriously. You mustn't laugh, I am quite
 serious. I don't like compliments, and I don't see why a man
 should think he is pleasing a woman enormously when he says to
 her a whole heap of things that he doesn't mean.

Lord Darlington. Ah, but I did mean them. *[Takes tea which she offers him.]*

Lady Windermere. [Gravely^] I hope not. I should
 be sorry to have to quarrel with you, Lord Darlington. I like
 you very much, you know that. But I shouldn't like you
 at all if I thought you were what most other men are.
 Believe me, you are better than most other men, and I
 sometimes think you pretend to be worse.

Lord Darlington. We all have our little vanities,
 Lady Windermere.

Lady Windermere. Why do you make that your
 special one?

[Still seated at table L.]

Lord Darlington. [Still seated L C.] Oh, nowadays so
 many conceited people go about Society pretending to be
 good, that I